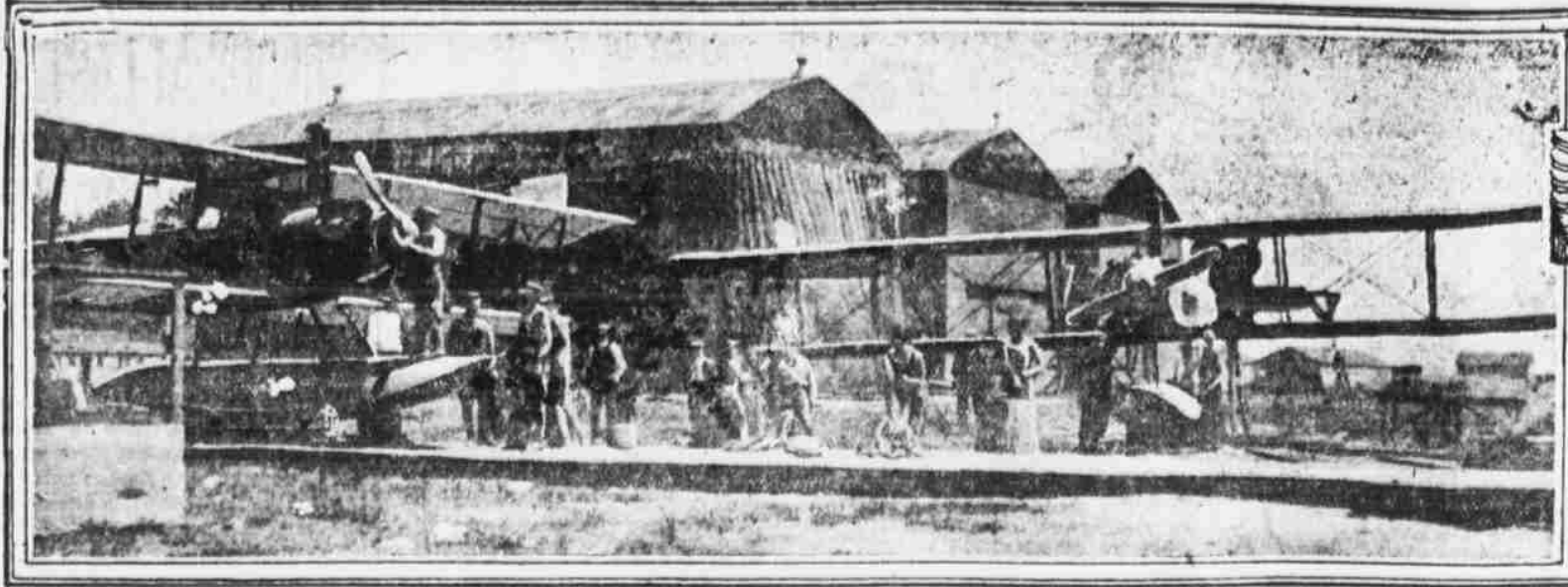


New York City's "Guardians of the Air"



Ready for a day in the air, N.Y. Police Airdrome, Fort Hamilton.

PHOTO BY
PHOTOGRAPHIC
DIVISION, N.Y.C.P.A.R.



Special Police
Commissioner
Rodman
WANAMAKER



Major
C. Anderson
WRIGHT

"Sky Cops," Praised by U. S. Navy, Now Ready for Any Job That Comes Along From Patrolling Airways to Catching Criminals Escaping on Outbound Ships—First Job Regulating "Air Traffic"

By Don Allen

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NEW YORK'S intrepid sky cops, so long the target of paragraphic gibes and the butt of so many cartoons, have at last nose-dived into their own. In fact, the millennium must be here, or hereabouts, for the United States Navy has, for the first time on record, praised something that is not wholly of the navy.

After lazing off from Washington recently, a Committee of Investigation from the United States Navy went over the N. Y. C. P. A. R. with a red-tipped fine-tooth comb, stood agape as its members were thrilled by the air antics of the police ace of the air, and then returned and in calm, dispassionate words announced to the Navy Department that "New York's air police is the model aviation reserve which the navy should use as a standard for the establishment of other reserve organizations throughout the country."

When the Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics down in Washington partly recovered from his surprise at the opening bomb dropped by Lieut. P. W. Neilson, U. S. N., and who had done most of the inspecting, the officer pointed out another cryptic paragraph in his report and which read:

"The New York Unit contains about forty men. There are also about 120 men in training as pilots and aviation mechanics. The condition of the N-9 type training planes turned over to the unit last spring is such as might serve as a lesson in plane maintenance to the aviation units of the regular establishment."

The subject of this little yarn came bobbing up before us the other day as we were passing a garage in front of which stood a sign in glaring red letters and which read:

"FREE AIR."

Naturally, in these days ANYTHING free would start a line of thought doing a Tennyson. From somewhere up in the domain of the eagle and carrier pigeon there came the soft, staccato purr of a plane. Once in awhile the folk below could catch the guttural, tuberculous cough of a second air boat, as the two sped on almost neck and neck. The wheezing plane's pilot started stunting directly over the centre of the city and the four or five out of the half million on the street just below him who bothered to look up gasped. The following plane went into an Immelman turn and brought up almost nose to nose with the carousing one. Down to within a couple hundred feet glided both planes and from the struts of the follower those who were looking could see the Police Department flag starched out by the breeze.

We had seen our first pinch made by an air traffic cop. Being interested, we looked the matter up.

It was easy to learn who the driver of the police plane was. Major C. Anderson Wright, resident in a uniform of dirty, greasy uniforms; his face smeared with cylinder oil, but shining forth on his left breast a copper's golden badge.

And it was from Major Wright, one of the mainstays of the police air force, that we learned who and what the unit is—and why.

"Most folks don't know what the N. Y. C. P. A. R. is," mused the Major, now doled up in the natty navy blue regalia of the air cop. "In fact, most folks think we're a paid force who drive planes up and down the main streets and into alleyways in search of sneak thieves. Well, we are not. We never have received one cent for our labor, and never will. In fact, we find it necessary to pay dues in order to take care of some of the petty expenses."

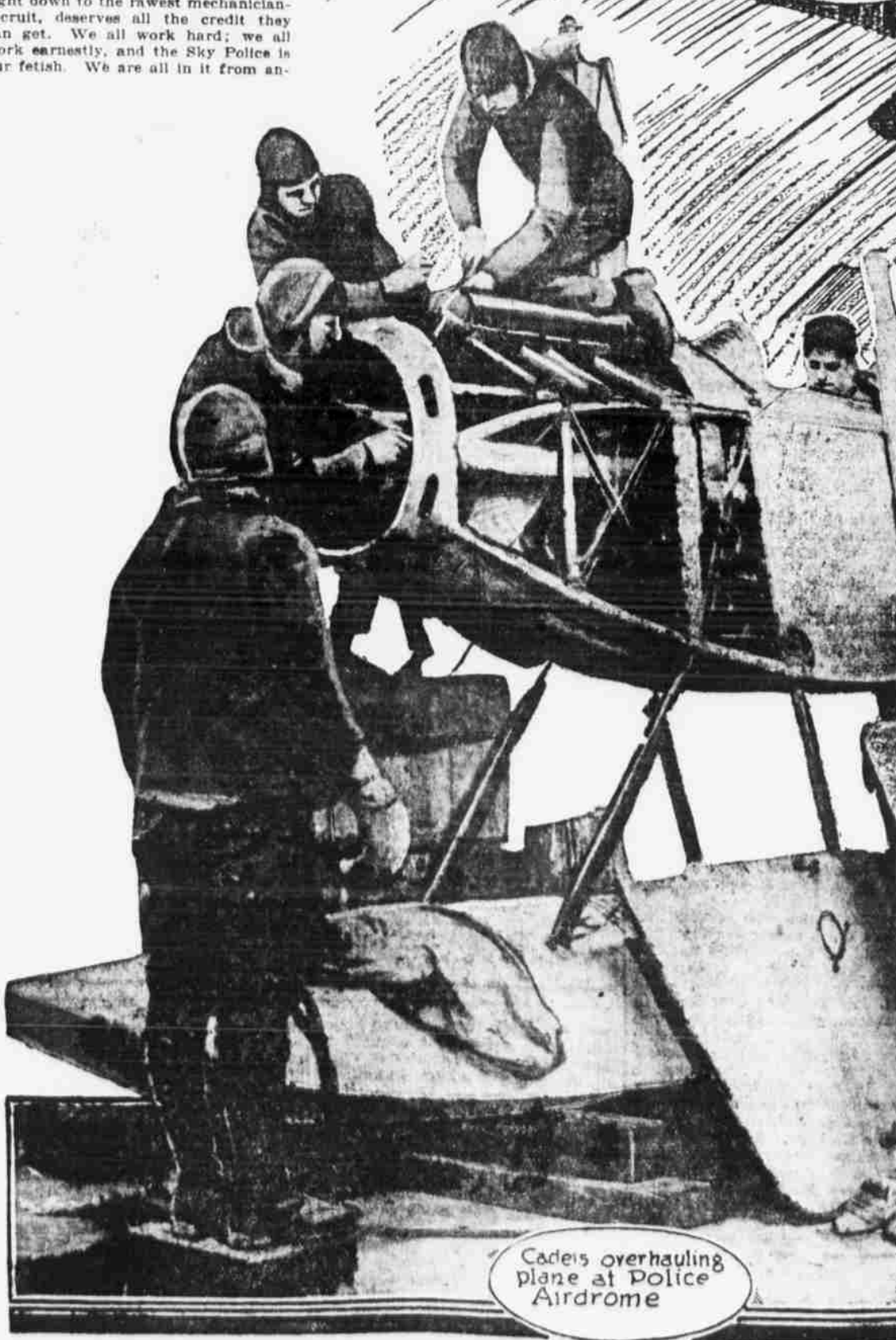
"It's rather hard to understand just what the real duties of air police are. But did you ever stop to think that if a bank robber should succeed in robbing a bank of many thousands and successfully reached a big liner at the moment of sailing and was well out to sea just how much a

police plane could do in the way of overtaking the liner and bringing the man back? Few even think of this simple little trick.

"Fewer still seem to realize just what it means to have some foolhardy aviator stunting over their heads. And it is just this foolish, and many times deadly flying, that we are out to stop. We don't especially care what happens to the aviator who stunts over a crowd, but we most certainly do care what happens to the crowd, and we're out to clear the skies of reckless flyers, just as the traffic cop is out to rid the streets of reckless automobilists."

"Deputy Commissioner Rodman Wanamaker, who is now in Paris, is the man who is responsible for our unit's being. It is his idea; he has sponsored it and helped us in every way. Just before he sailed away he gave us a heart-to-heart talk, the gist of which was to 'keep New York's air clean.' And we're out to do it, even if we have to open fire on all fool aviators who break the low-flying and stunting-over crowds ordinance."

"We have been a unit for about four years and were overjoyed when the Navy Committee gave us such a wonderful recommendation to their chief. But, even if I do say it myself, every man in the unit, from Inspector James Dwyer, in command, right down to the newest mechanic-recruit, deserves all the credit they can get. We all work hard; we all work earnestly, and the Sky Police is our fetish. We are all in it from an-



Cadets overhauling plane at Police Airdrome

chovies to demi-tasse and ready for any emergency.

"We have a wonderful ground school on Greenwich Street, where young men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one are taken in as

recruits and either drilled as pilots or, if they want to keep one foot on the ground, are moulded into aviation mechanics. One is just as necessary as the other. If any one has any doubts as to the value of the work of the non-flyers in our unit, let him gaze upon that portion of the Navy's report about the condition of our two planes. These planes came to us as pure junk, as the term is used by flyers, and now see what the Navy experts think of them. We have taken the junk and made real planes of them. And, just mull this over in your mind: The pilots of this unit have been in the air more than 5,000 flying hours without a single crash. We have flown down the bay to meet incoming notables or bid the city's guests Godspeed; we have chased air-ordinance violators; we have demonstrated in hundreds of ways just what service a police air force can be—and in 5,000 hours of actual flying time we have never had a crash.

"Our flying field at Fort Hamilton is one of the best in the country, and we have a landing place for seaplanes at the foot of West 82d Street and the North River. We have trained more than 200 men to fly and they are ready to take to the air at a moment's notice. That wouldn't be a bad asset in case of any serious trouble, now, would it?"

"Our pilots, that is, our training pilots, are all men with war records and they and the country are proud of them of nerve and innards that are ready for any duty, no matter how hazardous, they may be called on to perform."

"And the men at the head of our unit! Look at their names—the biggest in aviation! And yet some doubting Thomases are still asking: 'Well, what has the sky cop done? And what can he do?' There's Col. Frank O'Keefe, our commanding offi-

OFFICERED PERSONNEL Aviation Division Reserves, Police Department, City of New York.

OFFICIALS OF REGULAR POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Special Police Commissioner Rodman Wanamaker, in charge of Police Reserves.

Inspector John F. Dwyer, Aid to the Commissioner.

Major John F. Brennan, Attache from Police Department.

AVIATION DIVISION OFFICERS.

STAFF.

Col. Frank O'Keefe, Commanding Officer.

Col. Charles J. Glidden, Chief of Staff.

Major C. Anderson Wright, Executive Officer.

Lieut. Frederick Starr, Adjutant.

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS.

Major John Gans Jr., Chief Engineering Officer.

Major Donald Van de Water, Commander, Heavier Than Air Unit.

Major Augustus Post, Commander, Lighter Than Air Unit.

Major Horace Keane, Chief of Design and Construction.

Capt. Theodore H. Bridgman.

Capt. Claude R. Collins.

Capt. Oscar H. Berthold.

Capt. Frederick Klein.

Capt. John W. Semler.

Capt. Arthur C. Werther.

Capt. Herbert R. Gans.

Capt. Bernard Schiff.

Capt. Sidney Clark.

Capt. James J. Horeau.

Capt. Livingston Allan.

Capt. Paul Mitchell.

Capt. Walter Hinton.

PILOTS, ENGINEERS, INSTRUCTORS.

Lieut. Thomas F. Quirk.

Lieut. Arthur L. Grode.

Lieut. Leigh J. Bair.

Lieut. William G. Brewer.

Lieut. Edward F. Frost.

Lieut. William L. Purcell.

Lieut. Thomas B. Beljoe.

Lieut. L. R. Eastman.

Lieut. Eugene H. Caplan.

Lieut. James K. Dobbe.

Lieut. A. S. Dennis.

Lieut. Austin Lee Carboura.

Lieut. Edward H. Acres.

Lieut. R. J. Hefti.

Lieut. Louis Hefti.

Lieut. F. Garber.